

Kluane National Park

Yukon
CAI
IA71
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The park environment

Kluane is the story of icefields and wilderness. Dominated by some of the world's largest icefields outside polar regions, and accented by rugged mountains, wide valleys, mountain lakes, alpine meadows and tundra, the area is a superb example of the role glaciers play in determining the shape of the land. For survival, the living things have had to adapt to extremes of climate and variable topographic conditions. To preserve these natural elements for all generations, no one is permitted to damage or remove rocks, fossils and plants or to molest wildlife in any way.

The land

The dominant features of Kluane are two major mountain chains running parallel in a southeasterly direction. The Kluane Range, sometimes called the "front range," borders the Alaska and Haines Highways presenting a chain of 2,500 m (8,000-foot) summits interrupted only by a few large valleys cut by major rivers, three of them glacier-fed. To the west lies the Duke Depression, a narrow trough separating the Kluane Range from the icefield Ranges. This trough consists of several large plateaux and a series of valleys where tongues of glaciers still protrude.

The icefield Ranges, west of the Depression, contain Mt. Logan, at 5,950 m (19,520 feet) Canada's highest peak. Other major peaks include Mt. St. Elias 5,488 m (18,008 ft), Mt. Lucania 5,231 m (17,147 ft), Mt. Wood 5,173 m (16,971 ft), Mt. Steele 5,073 m (16,644 ft), Mt. Wood 4,842 m (15,885 ft), Mt. Vancouver 4,826 m (15,840 ft), and Mt. Hubbard 4,577 m (15,015 ft). Forming a base for this array is an ice-covered plateau 2,500 to 3,000 m (8,100 to 9,800 feet) in elevation. Dating back to the last Ice Age, these massive fields of snow and ice are maintained by moist Pacific air flowing over the mountains.

An extensive network of valley glaciers, such as the Steele, Seward, Hubbard, Logan, Donjek and Kaskawulsh, radiate from the icefields and account for year-round snow



and ice cover on more than half the park. The Steele is an unusual surging glacier that sporadically moves at a very rapid rate. During the late 1960's, it ground eleven kilometers (seven miles) downhill over a four month period and was nicknamed the "Galloping Glacier."

Vegetation

The Kluane environment ranges from forest to alpine tundra and from marshes to sand dunes. To the southeast, the vegetation is more luxuriant as a result of the climatic influence of the Pacific. Alpine tundra, characterized by lichens, dwarf birch and other low shrubs and herbs, occurs at altitudes from 1,200 m (4,000 feet) to 1,850 m (6,000 feet) in elevation. Dating back to the last Ice Age, these massive fields of snow and ice are maintained by moist Pacific air flowing over the mountains.

Grasslands are found in the valley bottoms and on

some south and southwest facing slopes. Characteristic species include wheat grass, bluegrass, pasture sagewort and golden eagles, mountain bluebird and sharp-tailed grouse.

Above timberline, trees give way to low-growing or stunted species of shrubs. Willow, shrub birch and alder are the most common and provide some protection for the profusion of smaller plants and flowers. Mountain avens and mountain heather are two particularly hardy plants which are able to survive the environmental extremes and extend into the alpine tundra zone where the growing season is short, cold and unpredictable. Snowdrifts last until late summer and frost may occur at any time. In spite of this, brightly coloured alpine and arctic flowers bloom throughout the summer.

The wildlife

Some of North America's finest wildlife populations inhabit Kluane National Park. Members of the largest subspecies of moose in North America are abundant in the major valleys of the park and Dall sheep may be seen on Sheep Mountain and other alpine areas. Mountain goats roam rocky slopes and cliffs in the south and a small herd of caribou occasionally enters the park near the Duke River.

Grizzlies are found throughout the park, being particularly abundant in the major river valleys and black bears occur in the forested areas. Out of respect for the wild nature of these animals and considering the fact man is only a visitor to their environment, a fine or jail term may be imposed on anyone feeding or harassing bears.

Travelers in bear country should be well informed of the necessary precautions to avoid confrontations and keep in mind that all wild animals can be dangerous.

Other mammals include the wolf, coyote, red fox, wolverine, arctic ground squirrel, lynx, beaver, otter, muskrat, mink, marmot and snowshoe hare.

The great diversity of biological communities in Kluane contributes to the variety of birdlife. Over 170

species have been reported in the area, including the upland sandpiper, Arctic tern, peregrine falcon, bald and golden eagles, mountain bluebird and sharp-tailed grouse.

Dall Sheep
Mouton de Dall



For your information

Season: The weather in the Kluane region is largely responsible for restricting the period of outdoor activity. Generally, weather suitable for camping and recreation falls between June 15 and September 15, although ski-touring and winter camping can be done except during the coldest period. Temperature extremes range between the high 20's in July to minus 50° C in January.

Hiking: Kluane National Park was established in 1972 and the trail system is still being planned. However, visitors can enjoy wilderness walks and hikes in many areas. Those planning extended trips should be aware that the country can be very deceptive and extremely rugged. Overnight hikers must register with a park warden or at the park office at km 1640, Alaska Highway (near Haines Junction), and obtain a campfire permit if they intend to build an open fire.

Boating: Motor boats may be used on Kathleen Lake, however, the waters can be rough and unpredictable. All motor boats must carry proper safety equipment and conform with Federal navigation regulations. Canoeing is not recommended in the park; however, those planning a canoe trip in one of the streams or rivers are urged to contact a park warden for information.

Climbing and Mountaineering: For their protection and safety, all mountain climbers must register with the Warden Service before and after the climb. Inexperienced climbers should obtain the services of a guide and full information about necessary equipment.

Groups planning an expedition into the icefield Ranges must apply in writing to the Superintendent for a permit at least three months in advance. Only groups with a minimum of four persons will be issued a permit and individuals must be experienced, equipped and supplied to the satisfaction of the Superintendent. Air support, radio communication and a physician's certificate are also required.

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Yukon
Kluane
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Icefield

Route 1A, km 1050 1/200 metres (3,000 ft) above sea level

Lehman Lake

1,000 ft (300 m) above sea level

1,000 ft (300 m) above sea

LEGEND

LÉGENDE

Highway (All Weather Road)	Grande route (tout-temps)
Secondary Road (Dry Weather Road)	Route secondaire (passable par temps sec)
Accommodation	Logement
Campground	Terrain de camping
Mountain	Montagne
Lake	Lac
River	Rivière
Creek	Ruisseau
Park Boundary	Limite du parc
Airstrip	Terrain d'atterrissement

METRIC CONVERSION TABLE

1 inch	2.5 centimetres
1 sq. in.	6.5 sq. centimetres
1 foot	0.3 metres
1 sq. ft.	0.09 sq. metres
1 yard	0.9 metres
1 sq. yard	0.8 sq. metres
1 mile	1.6 kilomètres
1 sq. mile	2.6 sq. kilomètres
1 acre	0.4 hectares

TABLE DE LA CONVERSION METRIQUE

1 pouce	2.5 centimètres
1 pouce carré	6.5 centimètres carrés
1 pied	0.3 mètres
1 pied carré	0.09 mètres carrés
1 verge	0.9 mètres
1 verge carrée	0.8 mètres carrés
1 mille	1.6 kilomètres
1 mille carré	2.6 kilomètres carrés
1 acre	0.4 hectares

Note:
This is but a reference map, designed to give you a general idea of what you will find in this park. It is not a road, hiking, or boating map.

Ceci n'est qu'une carte de référence dessinée dans le but de vous donner une idée générale de ce que vous trouverez dans ce parc. Il ne s'agit pas d'une carte de route, de promenade ou de canotage.

